CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE "ASSURANCE OF FAITH."

By the Rev. David Thom, *Liverpool.*

We last week noticed this work and promised our readers some extracts from it as soon as an opportunity should occur. The following will give a general idea of Mr. Thom's religious sentiments.

"With the Calvinists he [the author] contends, that God, of His sovereign good pleasure, chose in Christ, before the foundation of the world, a certain number of the human race that *they might be holy and without blame before him in love:* Eph. i, 4; Rom. viii, 29, 30; xi, 7: with the Arminians, that Christ died for all; having been *a propitiation not for the sins of* believers *only, but also for* the sins of the *whole world:* 1 John ii, 2; Heb. ii, 9: and with the Universalists, that Christ ultimately saves all; it having been the express purpose of his coming into the world, *that the world through him might be saved.* John iii, 16, 17; Rom. viii, 20, 21; 1 Tim. ii, 4, 6; James i, 18. And yet with popular religionists of all descriptions, the author agrees in maintaining that *the wicked shall be eternally punished;* Matt. xxv, 46; 2 Thess. i, 9; Rev. xxi, 8. With all deserving the Christian name, he strenuously contends for the Supreme Deity of the Lord Jesus. In denying the possibility of God's character being known to mankind, except by positive revelation; in denying that Adam, when he originally transgressed, forfeited spiritual and eternal life; and in some other respects, he will be found to coincide in his views with the Socinians. Perhaps, as a whole, his sentiments are most agreeable to what is denominated, the Supralapsarian Calvinistic Theory." *Pref.* pp. 14, and 15.

In some of these statements Mr. Thom approximates, sadly in appearance at least, to contradiction. How he can believe "with Universalists that Christ ultimately saves all," "and yet with popular religionists of all descriptions, that the wicked shall be eternally punished," seems rather mysterious. But Mr. Thom devotes a whole chapter in showing how "eternal punishment is compatible with eternal life." The author's ingenuity is here finely developed.

"The fundamental principles with which I set out, is the fact recorded, or implied in every page of the sacred volume, that *the whole human race* naturally are *wicked.* Rom. iii, 9—19; v, 12; &c. The *justice* of God is displayed in visiting these *wicked* ones with *death* as their appropriate *punishment; the wages of sin is death.* Rom. vi, 23. But their *punishment* is likewise *everlasting.* Matt. xxv, 46; &c. Their *everlasting punishment* cannot consist in *everiasting torments;** for this would imply that *wickedness is everlasting,* and that Christ instead of *destroying,* actually *confirms the works of the devil;* which, of course, cannot be. How, then can *the punishment* of human beings as *the wicked* be rendered *everlasting?* Only by their being *everlastingly destroyed.* But how can they be *destroyed* more than they are by *dying.* Only by their having their *present* nature, swallowed up in *another nature* which, as *everlasting* shall render their existence hereafter as wicked beings *absolutely impossible.** But as the only *everlasting nature* which we know, or can conceive of, is *the divine nature,* Exodus iii, 14; 1 Tim. vi, 16; &c. therefore, it must, by their having their wicked nature *here* changed into the divine nature *hereafter,* or by their having their wicked nature *everlastingly destroyed,* by their being *ultimately raised in the likeness of the Son of God,* that *the punishment of the wicked,* or *human beings as such,* which originally is *death,* can consistently with the whole tenor of Scripture, be converted into *everlasting punishment.* And yet, delightful thought! it is in this very fact that *mercy* is displayed, or that God appears *the Savior,* as well as *just.*

The whole secret then is, that *the same intelligent beings* are presented to us *in two different situations,* and *bearing two different characters.* Originally, they are *wicked* or *sinful.* Gen. ii, iii, &c. As *wicked* or *sinful* they die—*death* being *sin's wages,* Rom. vi, 23. But they are also *raised from the grave;* and *the nature* conferred upon them at the period of their resurrection, being *immortal,* or *the nature of Christ,* Rom. vi, 9; Rev. i, 17, 18, the *punishment* which they incur as wicked, is thereby rendered *everlasting.* Vol. 2, pp. 197, 198.

Such is Mr. Thom's explanation of his apparently self-contradictory proposition. We do not pretend here to judge of its correctness. The following passage is interesting from its bearing upon a prevalent opinion.

A large majority of popular religionists admit that at the final judgment such a display of the divine perfection shall be afforded *as shall constrain even the wicked to understand and acquiesce, or, at all events, to apprehend the justice of the punishment inflicted upon them.* Those likewise who entertain this notion place themselves in a false position: for

1st. They become bound to show that the *divine perfections,* and especially *the divine justice* may be understood and acquiesced in by beings, who nevertheless are the subjects of *everlasting torments.* According to many of those by whom the theory of eternal torments is maintained, the damned in hell are filled with horrible and inexhaustible rage against the holy name of God, and continue to blaspheme it for evermore. Such an idea as this, however, cannot of course be entertained by those who imagine, that the damned, although everlastingly punished, are nevertheless satisfied of and are constrained to acquiesce in the justice of their sentence. To suppose intelligent beings satisfied of the justice and propriety of the sufferings inflicted on them, and yet inflamed with resentment against the authority by which those sufferings are inflicted, is, as every man endowed with the slightest particle of common sense perceives, to suppose things which are incompatible and irreconcileable one with another. If, then, it be laid down as a fundamental principle, that the damned hereafter are satisfied of and acquiesce in the justice of their sentence, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that instead of raging against and blaspheming the name of God, they must be patient and submissive *under his mighty hand.* That is, according to the theory I am now opposing, God visits with *everlasting torments,* beings who are *completely satisfied of the magnitude and enormity of their offences,* and therefore *completley resigned to his blessed will!* But is this possible? Does not the statement carry along with it its own refutation? It is the grand object of a judicious earthly parent, in punishing his child, to bring him to a sense of his errors; and the moment this is accomplished the punishment is discontinued; and yet the Father of Spirits, after bringing the wicked to a sense of their misconduct, the grand legitimate end of punishment—is nevertheless supposed by our ordinary religionists, *to continue tormenting them forevermore!* I pity, from the bottom of my heart, the supporters and abettors of the doctrine of eternal torments. How perplexing the dilema in which they place themselves. The wicked hereafter either *apprehend the justice of the punishment inflicted on them,* or *they do not.* If they continue throughout eternity *ignorant of the justice which is displayed in their sufferings,* then, undoubtedly, they may, with the utmost propriety be represented as *raging against and blaspheming the name of God forevermore;* but in this case they cannot be spoken of as *understanding and acquiescing in the justice of their sentence.* God, under such circumstances, instead of appearing to them *just when He judges,* must be invested in their eyes with the attributes of *a gloomy and ruthless despot:* nay, the knowledge of his character and perfections being for these principles confined *hereafter* to the righteous, or to the very same class of persons by whom alone it is possessed *here,*—it follows that the nature and extent of divine manifestation *hereafter,* can in no respect whatever differ from or exceed what it is *here.* If, on the contrary, the justice and other perfections of Deity are at the final judgment displayed to the wicked; and if the necessary result of this is, an acquiescence on their part in the divine procedure towards them; how, I ask can those persons who have been brought into a temper of mind so suitable and becoming, be subjected to *everlasting torments?* Let the supporter of popular theories, who conceives himself to possess sufficient ingenuity for the task, try to extricate himself from this dilemma if he can." Vol. 2. pp. 17,18.

Mr. Thom exposes a contradiction found in the sentiments of Calvinists in the following manner. This class of Christians it is well known *theoretically* believe salvation to be purely by grace, the gift of God, and yet they are virtually acknowledging every day that this salvation is bestowed *conditionally,* that is, it must be attained by *works.*

The great majority of professing Calvinists, if examined respecting their own personal hope towards God, will, if sensible and honest men, be obliged to confess, that *they are not absolutely certain of possessing eternal life.* They have *a faint hope,* or *a good hope,* as the case may be, of finally reaching the Heavenly Glory; but they conceive that it would be presumption—daring blasphemous presumption—for them to express themselves confidently in regard to the subject. Let me now endeavor to shew them, as Calvinists, the glaring inconsistency—the marked self-contradiction—implied in their language. "We are certain," say they, "that eternal life is *the gift of God;* and that there never was an

*Commonly so called.—*Author.*

* This is *the second death.* Rev. xx, 14 &c.: also, Gen. iii, 15. and 1 Cor. xv, 54.—*Author.*

instance of its having been enjoyed by the children of men *on any other footing*. If not enjoyed *gratuitously*, we are satisfied that it cannot be enjoyed *at all*." So far well. Then you are certain that you yourselves are partakers of it. "Oh no; we are very far indeed from being so; on the contrary, we are not without fears, that we ourselves may yet finally come short of it." That is, my good friends, you profess to regard eternal life one moment *as the gift of God*, and another moment *as not the gift of God*: pray how do you reconcile the contradiction? "No such thing; we are certain that eternal life is the gift of God; we only say that we are not certain of its being *the gift of God* TO US." I beg your pardon; you do contradict yourselves; and were it not that *darkness hath blinded your eyes*, you yourselves would be conscious that the language which you have just been employing is very nearly the *ne plus ultra* of inconsistency—very nearly the grossest form in which self-contradiction could be expressed. You confess that you are not without doubts and fears respecting your own personal enjoyment of eternal life. Now, doubts and fears spring from a suspicion—whether avowed or not is of no consequence to my present argument—that something remains to be possessed or to be fulfilled by you, before you can be entitled to derive comfort from the divine promises. If you call in question the genealogy thus assigned by me to doubts and fears, it is surely not too much to ask you to substitute a better. But how is this possible? Unless some idea of eternal life being attained to and enjoyed *conditionally* were lurking in your minds, whence could your doubts and fears arise? Unless there were in you some latent suspicion, that you do not yet possess the condition or conditions upon which you conceive everlasting life to depend, on what principle is your anxiety respecting a future state to be accounted for? Can any thing be plainer, than that if you apprehended the blessing in question as bestowed on you *unconditionally*, you would likewise and as a matter of course apprehend it as bestowed on you *certainly*? Your own consciences, if listened to, will inform you that, notwithstanding all your professions to the contrary, you have suspicions that eternal life may after all be conditionally bestowed; and that to these suspicions of yours may be traced up your doubts and fears. But if so, how can you, conscious of cherishing such views and feelings, pretend to say, that you regard eternal life as a blessing which is *unconditionally* bestowed? Why, out of your own mouths you condemn yourselves. Take, then, your alternative. Either aver that in your view of matters eternal life is *unconditionally* bestowed, you, consistently with that declaration, perceiving it to be *already and certainly your own property*; or conscious that you entertain doubts and suspicions respecting your own personal enjoyment of it, hesitate not to avow, like honest men, that your views of the subject are *conditional*. What I am solicitous about, is, that while you are laboring under the suspicion of some condition or conditions, upon which, as you conceive, the inheritance of everlasting life depends; and while consequently, you are filled with doubts and fears respecting your own personal enjoyment of the privilege; you should not wrong your consciences nor expose yourselves to the ridicule of the discerning, by pretending to take an *unconditional* view of the matter. Cannot you see, that to speak of eternal life as *in every case the gift of God*, is to speak of it as *in every case bestowed unconditionally*; and yet that to admit the existence in your minds if doubts and fears respecting your own personal enjoyment of it, is virtually to declare that you are expecting it *to be bestowed in your own case conditionally*. Laboring under doubts and fears respecting your own enjoyment of eternal life, and yet professing to regard it as God's gift, how do you attempt to reconcile the glaring—the monstrous inconsistency?"

QUOTING SCRIPTURE.

It really makes us smile—how can we help it?—to see writers and hear preachers, while contending against the Gospel doctrine of salvation, quote certain passages of scripture—such as "these shall go away into everlasting punishment," "he that believeth not shall be damned," &c. as proof final and conclusive against our sentiments. And as we smile, we cannot sometimes wholly avoid a feeling of disgust whilst we witness the confident airs they put on whenever they repeat those passages. What do—what can—such writers and preachers think? Do they suppose they are informing us of texts which we never saw or heard of before? Do they flatter themselves that the mere repeating of such passages will convince us of the error of a doctrine which we have received from the Bible with those very textsbefore our eyes?

Time after time, yea, hundreds of times, have Universalists examined those passages and published their views concerning them. And they do believe, most truly and honestly, that their explanations are more Scriptural and consistent than any others. And in this opinion they are confirmed by the fact—a singular one as it may be thought to be—that few or none as yet have ever appeared seriously and in an argumentative manner to controvert or disprove them. Their expositions are before the world; Scripture is compared with Scripture; the original signification of terms is given on the best, even orthodox authorities; and the whole is crowned by a striking consistency and reasonableness; and yet no one has attempted to refute those expositions, while many have set off to the old tune of quoting the passages, and think they have thereby refuted Universalism! Is this folly or is it perverseness?

For instance. The orthodox quote forever and a day, Matt. xxv, 41. Universalists have clearly shown from verse 31, that this event, whatever it may be, was to take place "*when* the Son of man shall come in his glory." The orthodox say that time has not yet come; that it relates to a period after the destruction of the material Universe. The Universalist replies by referring to another part of the same discourse, where our Lord was speaking of the same subject, viz. to Chap. xxiv, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, where it is plain and positive that the Son of man was so to come before the generation then existing should pass away. History also is appealed to, to show that those events, or events that might be thus figuratively described, did take place about A.D. 69. But all this goes for nothing. The orthodox become dumb; offer no explanation, but set off again to prove Universalism false by quoting once or twice more, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment."

This course appears to us exceedingly unfair and uncandid. The orthodox would consider it so, we are persuaded, if we pursued a similar course in relation to them. Thank heaven, we have never yet been led to pursue so mean a course. But let them look at a case, Universalists out of the question. The orthodox and Methodists are at odds on the doctrine of election.—The former have certain texts which they rely upon. The Methodists have examined those texts, and explained them as *they* say and think, consistently with their Arminian creed. Dr. Clarke has commented on every passage which the orthodox have relied upon as proving the doctrine of election; and shown to the satisfaction of all Methodists, at least, that the Calvinistic interpretation is not the true one. Now what ought the orthodox to do? Plainly, either to show that the Methodist expositions of those texts are wrong, or give up their doctrine. The Methodists have a right to expect and demand as much as this from candid opponents. But suppose they should refuse to do either; should maintain a sullen and stubborn silence whenever Methodists attempt to give their views of the passages, and after hearing them through, should begin again and repeat the passages over a second and third time to convince them of their error. Would the Methodists think they were fairly treated? Would they be likely to be convinced of the truth of Calvinism by such a course? We think not.

It is so between us and our opponents. They quote a few passages of Scripture to which tradition has given a false meaning. We explain them candidly, by Scripture and by facts. Our opponents begin to quote them over again, and if we are not *now* convinced, they denounce us as incorrigible and given over to a reprobate mind. Perhaps the orthodox will not hear a word of advice from us; but at any rate we venture to exhort and entreat them, to be done repeating those passages in the expectation of convincing us of error, till they set themselves about showing that our interpretations of the texts are not correct; more so than their own. If they can do this, it will then be in order for them to resume the ding dong with which they have already half stultified the world.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

Christ came as a Messenger of love. He spake of a kind father who hath provided abundance of temporal and spiritual blessings for his evil and ungrateful creatures, and who 'sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust.' He persuaded men by the love of their Heavenly Parent, by the joys of virtue and the evils and unhappiness of vice, to forsake their idolatry and wickedness, and turn unto him who is the 'giver of every good and perfect gift.' He exhorted them to the cultivation of enlarged views and an extension of their social feelings; to pursue virtue and to practice deeds of beneficence towards their fellow men. He went about himself 'doing good,' and administering consolation to the widow, the orphan, and the distressed. He portrayed the character of the good Samaritan, who bound up the wounds of the man who had fallen among thieves, when the Levite and the Priest had passed by on the other side, and commanded his hearers to 'go and do likewise.' He abjured the unchristian law of retaliation, which required 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,' and substituted instead thereof the law of *Love*, which taught men to 'love their enemies and do good unto those who despitefully used and persecuted' them. He abolished the superstitious and foolish ceremonies of the Jews, and cleared the holy temple of those who defiled it by their corruptions and traffic, and who had made it a 'den of thieves,' instead of a 'house of prayer.' He taught that out of the heart proceeded those things that defile a man, and that the correction of depraved dispositions was of more importance than outward forms and ceremonies, which signified nothing. He taught humility of mind and conduct, even to taking the lowest seats at festivals; ate and drank with sinners; forgave their sins, and imparted to them of the hopes and consolations of his gospel. He blessed the 'poor in spirit,' the 'meek,' the 'merciful,' the 'poor in heart,' and the 'peace makers.' He not only taught, that men should not steal, or kill, or break any of the commandments, but that they who cherished the disposition to commit sin, were equally guilty with those who broke out in open violation of the Decalogue, thus striking at the root of all immorality and crime. He likewise taught the virtue of Charity, that greatest of all virtues. He encouraged the giving of alms, not ostentatiously to be seen of men, but with a pure de-

sire of benefitting those who needed relief. He cautioned his hearers from taking too much anxiety for the future, but advised rather an humble confidence in the goodness of providence who gives food to 'the fowls of heaven and clothes the lilies of the field,' which are arrayed with more glory, than are the princes of the earth. He taught the duty of forgiveness of those who trespassed against them, as they expected to be forgiven their trespasses against their God. He enjoined the duty of prayer to their Heavenly Parent, not in synagogues and at the corners of the streets, to be seen of men, but in secret, that their Father who seeth in secret might reward them openly. He rebuketh all censoriousness and uncharitable judgment; taught his followers to ask and it should be given to them, to seek and they should find of the blessings of a Merciful Creator, saying to them, 'For what man is there of you who if his son ask bread will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent?' If ye then (said he,) being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him; therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the Prophets.

Such is the substance of that gospel which is 'peace and good will to men;' and how excellent are the doctrines and how pure the ethics of such a system! Reader, go and imitate the example, and practice the precepts of him of *Nazareth*, and true happiness will be thy reward.

Gospel Witness.

HINTS TO UNIVERSALISTS.

Brethren—I have long had it in my mind to say a few words to you, respecting the means best calculated to promote the cause of Universal Grace. As I take you to be sincere believers in the glorious doctrine of a world's salvation; and as I believe you will be ready and willing to do for its extension, what enlightened reason dictates should be done—I claim no indulgence in what I am about to offer, other than a candid hearing. The subject is truly important, and merits the serious consideration of all. It is therefore hoped, that no one will take it for granted, that these hints are not offered to *him*; for I would be understood as addressing myself to all believers, individually and collectively. A preacher once complained that his audience were *too charitable*. On being asked what he meant, he said that when he preached to them the punishment of sin, and called on them to reform—each hearer thought he meant his neighbor; and thus was so charitable as to give away what properly belonged to himself. I flatter myself that I shall have no such complaint to enter, and will, therefore, proceed to 'show mine opinion,' in the subject of these essays.

First—We will suppose a few of you scattered over a town, in which there is no preaching that you can hear with satisfaction. Is it not a duty which you owe to your God, to yourselves and families, to appropriate what you can conveniently spare of time and money, to the support of the truth as you believe it? Can you consistently, not only neglect to support the truth, but use your means to build up error? Will you take the 'talent' God has given you, and bury it in the rubbish of falsehood and superstition? And are you willing to aid the abettors of a system of religion you believe to be absolutely false, and tending to overthrow the very temple of liberty your brethren are striving to sustain? I ask these questions in candor to each and every one, and beg you to reflect seriously upon their bearing, and then act accordingly.

Perhaps you will say that there are so few of you, and you are so scattered, that you can do but little in support of the truth if you try. Very well; it is required of a man according to that he hath—your 'little' will be acceptable. And besides; because you are unable to do much for the truth, does it follow as a matter of course, that you are right in aiding error.

But why not form yourselves into a society? Are you afraid of the derision and contempt of your opposers? Let me earnestly entreat you to 'obey God rather than men;' to let your light shine, so that others seeing your good works may glorify your Father who is in heaven. Despise not the day of small things—however small your number, remember, the march of truth is onward, and that in many places where societies are now large and flourishing, the time was, when their prospects were no better than yours are. And as they did not attain to their present prosperous condition by supporting their opposers, neither may you look for better times, until you shall have taken the proper steps to produce them.

Methinks I hear some one say—my wife and family are opposed to my views, and if I were to follow your directions, it would create difficulty at home. Will not your wife and family agree to go with you one half the time, if you will go with them the other half? Do show them how accommodating you can be, and if after they discover your willingness to meet them half way, they persist in their opposition, let them know that you are independent. Go to meeting when and where you please. If you surrender your rights, you forfeit your claims upon their respect—you lose confidence in yourself, and become the veriest slave in your own house. In one word; if you cannot enjoy peace at home by maintaining your rights, you may in vain attempt to taste the sweets of liberty, by an unreserved compliance with the wishes of those, who usurp supreme control, where union and equality should be the motto.

Let me again urge you to form a society. Do not wait for the troubling of the waters; for the time will never come when every thing will be just right. In an associate capacity you may accomplish much, for which you may look in vain under present circumstances. It will enable you to have preaching occasionally, and then the burden will fall on all alike; while now, one or two take the whole responsibility. It will also be the means of introducing books and papers among you, and as a natural consequence, will extend a knowledge of your sentiments among your neighbors.—*Religious Inquirer.*

FROM THE MAGAZINE AND ADVOCATE.

MESSRS. EDITORS—I am a plain subject and seldom obtrude myself upon the public, or the notice of individuals, but under present circumstances I deem it proper to inform you of some things in relation to a protracted meeting recently held in the Baptist house, at Salisbury's mills, Jefferson county, N. Y. Some part of my present employment was never anticipated by me. From about the first of May last I have been under the necessity of remaining at home to protect the sick from the intolerant fanaticism that is now prevailing in this place with the Baptist society. In the month of May their protracted meeting commenced, headed by a Rev. Mr. Knapp, formerly of Watertown, and continued fifteen days; and it has since been kept a going every night of the week, and Saturdays and Sundays. I never witnessed such a scene before. A number of blackguards were employed, with Elder Knapp their leader, to conduct the meeting (to use their own language) until God come; and their conversation was less becoming than that of the most studied blackguard that I ever witnessed in a petty law suit before a justice; and their language, at times, more degrading than the most vulgar bar-room slang. You can better judge, however, by having a specimen. The deacon of the church, a respectable gentleman, (although doubted by some,) was asked to pray. He did so, in his plain and simple manner, but without the ridiculous pranks and great excitement that was required. At the conclusion of his prayer, the presiding Elder observed to the deacon that he ought to be whipped, and that one or two more such prayers would *freeze hell over!* Another minister, while preaching, observed to a gray headed Universalist that his head looked like a steeple of a meeting-house sticking out of hell! Another said in his prayer, in the presence of our former Postmaster, that he (Mr. Weeks) was an old gray headed apostate, a cat's paw of the devil, and finally that he could not pray for him any more than for the old devil himself!—Another said, in prayer, that my wife was on the bed of death, and a going to hell! that I would soon follow to the same place, praying that God might send down his wrath upon that waspish lawyer; for the work of God could not prevail as long as such Infidels were present, and that if I was sent immediately to hell, he would say amen. Another good saint prayed that God would turn me out of heaven into hell, for turning Christians out of my house. I deprived no Christians the privileges of my house, unless those who came with *their* god (Elder Knapp) in one hand, and the rod of his wrath in the other, to disturb the sick and dying with their abuse, can be called Christians. One of the charitable sisters, a leader of the female part of the meeting, told the sister of my wife, while at church, because she questioned the propriety of the sermon, that she might awake before the morning in hell! and to aggravate her feelings further, remarked that her sister, (my wife,) who was then on her death bed, was in the same condition. During the first week of the meeting, young saints, with whom Mrs. S. was entirely unacquainted, would frequently call, and step to her bed, and commence their slang with the most consummate impudence that was ever witnessed in civilized society, till at length I was requested, by her, not to allow them to come into the room, and if they did, to turn them out. These strangers, sent from the meeting to insult us, would come in, without speaking to any one, and step to the bed side, "Well ma'am, you don't expect to live do you?" while she could scarcely raise her head from the pillow—she would reply, "I do not expect to get well." "Have you experienced a change of heart?" "Not that wonderful change that some pretend to have had, but I have a hope and confidence in my God that divests me of all fear as to my future welfare." "This will not do, Madam, you must repent or you will go to hell." Thus continuing to repeat such language without knowing at all the condition of her mind. Two of the good brethren were sent to my house about this time, and after seating themselves, one commenced conversation by undertaking to tell his duty in coming, &c. I requested him to stop until I asked him a question. "Have you come here, Sir, to destroy my influence with my wife?" His answer was, "*I have.*" I then gave them a lecture, in which I alluded to the peace that had at all times prevailed in my family, and the frequent quarrels they themselves had had with their praying wives, and that their present object was to destroy my tranquility, and thus make me as bad as themselves, and to turn an affectionate wife against me as we were about to take the parting hand in this world of trouble. Under this treatment they left the house, with tears of repentance and regret, and I presume were taught a lesson not soon to be forgotten. My name was frequently mentioned in meeting while preaching, and in prayer, and my principles grossly misrepresented. I occasionally attempted to reply, and respectfully asked the privilege of vindicating my character from their attacks, but was at all times prevented, by the Elder calling on his willing slaves to pray or sing, and thus prevent a discourse.

Henderson, June 2d, 1833. H. SPENCER.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

I had a friend, who, among the many blessings which indulgent heaven scattered around his path, possessed two lovely daughters. They were at that delightful period, when the helplessness of infancy has been succeeded by the gaiety, animation and curiosity of childhood; when all the objects that surrounded them, of nature or of art, seemed spread out before them, like some splendid drama, to attract their wondering admiration. The common things of earth, which man in his pursuit of splendid trifles passes unheeded by, possessed to them a beauty more glowing than the brightest El Dorado which human fancy has portrayed. The birds sang among the majestic trees, to glad their young hearts; the earth was carpeted with verdure, to receive their bounding footsteps; the butterflies and insects sported among the fragrant flowers to increase their innocent enjoyment; and even when repulsive winter come over the earth, there were charms for them in the brilliant jewelry of frostwork which nature, avish of ornament, bestows upon its naked scenery; and they had learned even then to look up with love and reverence to a kind heavenly Father,

"Who formed and built and still upholds a world
So clothed with beauty for rebellious man."

Oh, there is something in innocent, happy childhood which speaks to us of heaven; which tells us of those pure angelic beings which surround the throne of God, untouched by sin, untainted by the breath of corruption.

The elder of these lovely companions was a creature of thought; from her full dark eyes there beamed an expression of intelligence, which told of loftier musings than childhood's early dreams. Though her little life had numbered scarce five summers, yet was she acquiring the treasures of knowledge, with surpassing ability: at times she seemed abstracted from scenes around her, and absorbed in the contemplation of higher and holier things; at others she would lead in the gay frolics of her companions, with an energy and spirit which showed she was not always a dreamer. The snatches of youthful poetry, with which her young mind was liberally furnished, were often applied to objects around her with a propriety worthy of maturer years. The younger, though not inferior to her sister in those moral powers which elevate our race in the scale of existence, was much less disposed to abstract thought. She was a being of life, brilliancy and observation; her ideas were rapid and vivid like the lightning's flash, and the movements of her delicate form seemed light as the steps of Ariel.

Could death have power over things so lovely? In the midst of happiness, while their speaking eyes were still bright, and health flung around them her rich luxriance, that devouring scourge, which has scathed and withered the hopes of so many fond parents, and despatched so many lovely innocents to a premature grave, had marked them for its victims. The scarlet fever seized them at once, the elder more severely than the younger; and when scarce two days had passed away, all that remained on earth of the animated and intelligent Elizabeth was her untenanted form, cold and motionless. How insufficient is human language to express the agony of parents, when called to surrender the cherished object of their love to the cold and silent grave; to stand beside the bed of death, to watch the struggles of expiring nature, to see the eye now beaming with consciousness, and then averted by distress, to see the limbs extended, the lips quivering with the convulsions of agony, and then to feel that no rest, but the repose of death, will still those agitations; and that the moment which brings calmness and peace to that suffering body shall separate them from all earthly communion with a being so much beloved. These are emotions beyond even the conception of those who never felt their sad reality.

Then, when the fluttering pulse is still, and the marble brow is cold, while gazing on

——"That loveliness in death
Which parts not quite with parting breath;"

To feel that those sealed lips will never again utter the language of affection, nor those lifeless arms be extended in the caresses of infantile love, these are the tempests of the soul to which none but an Almighty voice can say, "Peace—be still."

It was June, the bright and beautiful and leafy June; but the sun withheld his cheering beams, and the clouds discharged their pearly tears, as if in sympathy with the desolation which death was making.

The younger lingered week after week, amid the fluctuations of alternate hope and despondency. Her prospect of returning health was indeed unpromising, but affection readily extracts materials for happy anticipation from those scenes where reason would despond; and on the edges of the dark cloud of despair, hope plays and tinges them with gold. When three months of sickness had passed away, she died, & those bright forms so lately sporting together in all the ecstacy of youthful gaiety, were again united, silent and motionless, in earth's cold bed. There the damp dews of night fall harmless over them, and the warm sun, and the bright stars, from the blue vault above, look out unheeded on their resting place. But the grave binds not the soul; and their pure spirits now expand in heaven.—*Ladies Magazine.*

[The following sketch of a fire scene is extracted from an article in the N. York Mirror, published in 1831. Whoever has witnessed a fire during the night season in populous places will acknowledge the justness of the writer's delineation; and whoever has not, may gather from it some faint idea of the distressing scenes frequently witnessed in this dense city.]

It was a quiet, starry night. The houses on the opposite side of the street in which I resided, and apparently within a quarter of a mile of my dwelling, reflected a brilliant glare of light, and volumes of fiery smoke rolled upwards with the motion of heavy billows toward the reddening sky. The shout multiplied from all quarters; the deep-toned bells began to toll; figures here and there rushed rapidly towards the scene of action; an engine thundered over the pavements; beneath my window the forms of the firemen in their huge caps and jackets shown like demons in the red dusky gleams of the torches; hoarse voices, with shouts and imprecations, urge each other onward. Hastily clothing myself, I sallied forth and hurried to the conflagration.

There is nothing in nature more beautiful than fire, and more terrible in its beauty. When thus arrayed for purposes of ruin, it conveys to me an impression similar to that which I receive from the sight of a powerful serpent.—There is the same fatal brilliancy, the same fearful grace and relentless spirit of destruction, and the same admirable fitness as emblems of the infernal regions. In darkness this wonderful element exhibits its grandeur with a more magnificent effect. The roofs of lofty buildings, and summits of chimneys; the tall steeples and swelling domes, shone vividly in the distance, painted by the lurid glare. Dense masses of smoke in the intervals of a slight breeze, shrouded the blaze and darkened the scene, till leaping and glistening, through the gloom like a sheet of lightening from the brooding cloud, the flame again dazzled the eye, and made the "darkness visible" with a radiant but dim and melancholy lustre. The conflagration had burst forth in a stable in the rear of a large wooden church, and in the midst of a closely crowded block of buildings, mostly of the same materials. A long season of intensely hot weather, without rain, had rendered them uncommonly combustible. The wind was sufficiently strong to increase the fury of the element into an ungovernable rage that resembled madness; and the cry went forth through the crowd that there was no water to be obtained, till the engines could form a line to the river, the distance to which was great: in the meantime, the flame was running rapidly along the roof of the church, at first gently curling, and gradually extending to the rear and front. The crowd collected—the wind increased—the frame building was soon blazing with incalculable fury, and the flame communicated to the several adjoining houses. In less than half an hour, the rear of the church was completely consumed: a vast sheet of fire washed over it like an ocean—the interior was brightly visible; the pews, bannisters, galleries, carved columns and white ceilings, yielded rapidly to the intense heat—timber crackling—walls crashing—chimneys falling—furniture tumbling from windows—men shouting through trumpets—engines thundering—women screaming—glass breaking—earth trembling beneath our feet—the vast multitude swarming like bees in their hive, rocking and heaving in the narrow streets, and clustering on the steps, lamps, windows, and the broad arch of heaven burning and glowing above, all formed a scene of sublime grandeur. * * * The confusion continues. Here you may behold a heap of furniture, there a group of persons just escaped from the flames. Mark yonder building with the brick front, and nearly destroyed—the ravenous blaze is feeding on the ruins in which fancy pictures many a group of domestic peace and hope. The frame work is consumed—the front totters—the firemen place their long heavy ladders against it. Hark! crash; up to the sky flash the expiring flames, and then sink with the heap of crumbled ruin. That poor dwelling belonged to a widow with a large family nearly dependant on her exertions. She was even too indigent to get it insured. With what feelings will she greet the returning day. A fine boy has escaped from his home, and is eagerly yielding to the excitement of the scene. He dashes fearlessly through the crowd and seizes the rope of the engine; but his foot slips; he falls; the dreadful machine rushes on; a smothered scream is faintly heard amid the dreadful surrounding din, and now a trampled and bleeding body is borne senseless through the crowd to blast some fond mother's sight, and strike her bosom with horror and anguish unutterable.

* * * * *

The heavens are shining again with all their stars. The vast city is wrapt in shadows. The pealing bells have ceased. Silence is in the streets: all, except a low confused sound from the spot where death and destruction have been at work. You may hear the faint hum, like the subdued roar of the sea, when the storm has passed away, or the hush of the field of battle after the conflict. Wearied and exhausted firemen are slowly dragging home their engines. Morning breaks in the east * * *

The noonday sky overspreads the gay Broadway. * * * The voice of youth and pleasure is around me. * * * The wealthy are purchasing luxuries, the joyous giving loose to mirth. Why at such a moment should my melancholy thoughts steal back to the wreck of ruin; to the desolate dwelling of the widow, the mangled form of that fearless boy, and to the family at whose festive board, hereafter, his bright head must be missed.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK, AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1833.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

At the Orchard-street Church, and at the New Church in Sixth Avenue, foot of Amity-street commence regularly every Sabbath at half past *ten* in the morning—half past *three* in the afternoon, and at *eight* in the evening.

Br. Calvin Gardner, late of Lowell, Mass. will preach in the Greenwich Church, in the forenoon of to morrow, and in the Orchard st. Church in the afternoon and evening.

LETTERS TO THE REV. DR. BROWNLEE—NO. XVI.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—

I now proceed to your fifth and last proposition against Universalism, viz:

"The system of Universalism is supported only by false interpretations of passages of Scripture."

This proposition involves the fate of the doctrine which I have the honor and pleasure of defending against your attacks. If it is sustained, Universalism falls to the ground. For it is only on the just interpretation of the word of God that we found our hopes. If our interpretations are false, we err indeed, and in our error perish man's best expectations for heaven. For let me say, sir, that denying Universalism, neither you nor any other man on earth, can, without a special revelation, possess an assurance of his personal everlasting well-being.—The Calvinist, it is true, feels assured that the elect of God shall infallibly be saved. But who those elect are is only known to God, with whom is the "secret counsel" and to whom belongeth the "secret things." The question for you and every other Calvinist to answer for himself, is not whether the elect shall finally be saved, but, Am *I* one of the elect? Am I FULLY ASSURED—as I am of the existence of God, or the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth—that *I* am a chosen vessel of the Lord? Can you, sir, answer these questions in the affirmative? Did you ever see a Calvinist, in the cool hour of sober meditation, when free from the flush of momentary hope, which sometimes blooms in assurance only to fade away into deeper despondency, who could thus answer? Nor does it avail any thing to believe in the "final perseverance of the saints."—For the question is not, will the saints persevere to the end, but, Am *I* a saint? Take what view you please, sir, and you must be more fortunate than myself, if you can detect one particle of "assurance of hope" in the Calvinistic system. To mortals, it is no better than a lottery. For although those "thus predestinated and foreordained, [a part for heaven and a part for hell,] are *particularly** and unchangeably designed, and this number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished," yet with respect to your own, or your wife's, or your children's personal election, your are as profoundly ignorant as the benighted Hindoo. Read, sir, this honest confession of Calvin himself and tell me how great peace you find in believing.

"As it is erroneous therefore to suspend the efficacy of election upon the faith of the gospel, by which we discover our interest in election; So we shall observe the best order, if in seeking an assurance of our election, we confine our attention to those subsequent signs which are certain attestations of it. Satan never attacks the faithful with a more grievous or dangerous temptation than when he disquiets them with doubts of their election, and stimulates to an improper desire of seeking it in a wrong way. I call it seeking in a wrong way, when miserable man endeavors to force his way into the secret recesses of Divine wisdom, and to penetrate even to the highest eternity, that he may discover what is determined concerning him at the tribunal of God. Then he precipitates himself to be absorbed in the profound of an unfathomable gulf; then he entangles himself in numberless and inextricable snares; then he sinks himself in an abyss of total darkness. For it is right that the folly of the human mind should be thus punished with horrible destruction, when it attempts by its own ability to rise to the summit of Divine wisdom. This temptation is the more fatal, because there is no other to which men generally have a stronger propensity. For there is scarcely a person to be found, whose mind is not sometimes struck with this thought, Whence can you obtain salvation but from the election of God? And what revelation have you received of election? If this has once impressed a man, it either perpetually excruciates the unhappy being with dreadful torments, or altogether stupifies him with astonishment. Indeed I should want no stronger argument to prove how extremely erroneous the conceptions of such persons are respecting predestination, than experience itself; since no error can affect the mind more pestilent than such as disturbs the conscience, and destroys its peace and tranquility toward God. Therefore, if we dread shipwreck, let us anxiously beware of this rock, on which none ever strike without being destroyed." Inst. Chris. Rel. B. III. Chap. xxiv, § 4.

What a beautiful religion! What a glorious faith! What transcendent hopes does it inspire! To believe is impossible,* and to doubt, is to be damned In what a miserable condition is man placed. He must not go back and endeavor to satisfy himself directly of his personal election. If he does, "then" says Calvin, "he sinks himself in an abyss of total darkness." He must not ask, "What revelation have I received of personal election?" For if this thought has ever impressed a man, and "there is scarcely a person to be found whose mind has not sometimes been struck" with it, "it either perpetually excruciates the unhappy being with dreadful torments, or altogether stupifies him with astonishment." But what shall he do? Must he take for granted his eternal election, and believe like a Mussulman without any evidence whatever? No, says Calvin, "we must confine our attention to those subsequent signs which are certain attestations of it." But what are those subsequent signs? Why, if I have been fortunate enough to understand passages, which Calvin seems designedly to have rendered obscure, simply *faith* and *perseverance*. But *faith* is no "certain attestation" to our personal election, since as Calvin himself acknowledges, "it daily happens that they who appeared to belong to Christ, fall away from him again, and sink into ruin." And as to *perseverance*, it can afford no assurance until life be ended, when in the clearer light of eternity, its testimony will be useless.

What ground then, let me ask, have you for "assurance of hope?" None at all. Like the purchaser of lottery tickets, whose scheme has already been drawn in a distant city, you hope your number has come up a prize, but you hope with trembling, lest after all alas! it should prove to be a blank. Is it, Dr. Brownlee, is it not so? In your most confident hours, does not the tormenting thought sometimes intrude, that you are laboring under a most awful delusion, and that the realities of the future world may disclose your name written among the eternally damned?

But if Calvinism, which ascribes salvation wholly to the grace of God, leaves mankind in darkness and doubt like this, what shall we say of the wretched uncertainties of Arminianism? I need not ask Dr. Brownlee this question, for he knows full well that if God has not designed our salvation, it is useless to hope for it from ourselves. But if Arminianism be adopted, as advocated by Dr. Clarke, that "giant in Hebrew and Greek," it may be a matter of doubt whether God ever *foreknew* our salvation only as *conditional*; that is, he actually knew nothing about it; and Time, who tries all things human, can alone determine whether you, or I, or any other mortal, shall finally attain to heaven. If you wish to surfeit your soul with doubts and fears, be an Arminian.

But I am pursuing this subject farther perhaps than is necessary. I wished only to show you, and Limitarians of everysect, that aside from Universalism there is no possibility of "full assurance" of our own salvation. Universalists know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. They believe the record that God hath given of his Son. "And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." They know that they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for their sins, and not for theirs only, but for the sins of the whole world. And they are willing both to labor and suffer reproach, because they trust in the living God who is the Savior of all men, specially them that believe. May I exhort you, dear sir, to think of these things and to ask yourself candidly if it is not true, that in warring against Universalism, you are found not only fighting against the truth as it is in Jesus, but also, using your best endeavors to annihilate your own grounds of hope and confidence toward God?

After this long, but I trust not profitless, digression, let us return to your last proposition. Here I am obliged to rely principally on the very brief notes of the gentleman who reported your Lectures for the Christian Intelligencer. You say

"They [Universalists] argue from Gen. xxii, 18. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Paul in his epistle to the Galatians has explained this passage, and we coincide with him in opinion that "they which be of faith" (not all men) "are blessed with faithful Abraham."

Now this is an easy method of turning an argument, and to Limitarians it is no doubt wonderfully convincing. But I beg you just to trace the ground over again. God promised to Abraham, (and renewed it to Isaac and Jacob,) that in is his seed, all the nations or kindreds of the earth should be blessed. Abraham believed this gospel thus preached by God himself, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness. Now Paul reprehended the Galatians for expecting to be justified by the works of the Mosaic law. He said, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" And then refers them to the case of Abraham. "Even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now mark: Abraham believed that *all nations were to be blessed in Christ, his seed*, and in and by this faith alone was he blessed. Others possessing the same faith the Apostle argued would be made partakers of the same blessing and that without performing the long

*Saybrook and Presbyterian Confessions of Faith.

*Perhaps the Calvinist, like the saint of old, can say, "I believe, because it is impossible."

round of Jewish rites and ceremonies. But because those who possess this faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, is it good logic, sir, to argue as you have done, that *all men* shall never be blessed in Christ? Most certainly not. Paul has asserted nothing like it. On the contrary, he has not attempted any explanation of the passage in question. He was satisfied to let it stand as the Holy Ghost had caused it to be written. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The apostle merely asserted that justification was to be expected from faith in the promises of God, and not from the works of a ceremonial law. But I would have you observe the extent of those promises. They are limited to no nation, tongue, or people, to no age or country. They are universal in their very nature, and Dr. Brownlee will appeal to Paul in vain for one solitary intimation to the contrary. If you wish to disbelieve that "*all the nations*," "all the families," and "all the kindreds of the earth" shall be blessed in Jesus Christ, pray indulge your scepticism without wishing to involve Paul in your own condemnation. If you cannot believe God, do not abuse those who can, nor expect that your deliberate scepticism will, like the faith of Abraham, be accounted to you for righteousness. I would ask you candidly, sir, to explain these broad declarations of the word of God in accordance with your narrow creed. Think not to avoid the difficulty by perverting the sentiments of an inspired apostle. Meet the argument of Universalists fairly, and rebut it if you can. Prove, sir, that Christ is not "the Savior of the world"—that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall" *not* "be made alive." Prove that Jesus came to seek and to save a part only of that which was lost, and you will have done something toward overthrowing our argument drawn from the promise of God to Abraham. Until this task is accomplished, the plain common-sense interpretation which Universalists give of this promise is sustained and corroborated by the subsequent facts.

I could wish you had commented upon our "false interpretation" of this passage of Scripture. Gen. iii, 14, 15, "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, &c.—dust shalt thou eat *all the days of thy life*. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it shall bruise thy head*, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Universalists contend that the seed of the woman is Christ, and the serpent is the principle of evil, which you may call a person or not as you understand the Bible to teach, and which is commonly called Satan, Devil, &c. By a bruise of the heel they understand a curable wound, but a bruise or crushing of the serpents head is mortal. In other words they believe that Jesus Christ was promised to *destroy* the Devil; and if the Devil, his kingdom likewise, and with his kingdom, sin; and in the destruction of sin, ends misery. Please, sir, examine this interpretation and expose its falsity. In my next I shall review the remainder of your examples.

Respectfully, &c. T. J. Sawyer.

Rev. W. C. Brownlee, D. D.

A QUESTION.

I shall not now dispute the popular views of forgiveness. Man, by sinning, injures himself and his fellow-man. Sin, committed by mankind, cannot injure Deity—cannot injure Satan.

There is no individual bearing the similitude of humanity, who is so perfectly destitute of kindly feeling, as to desire the endless misery of even his bitterest enemy. He would heartily forgive his deadliest foe, ere a century of suffering had been inflicted.

According to Partialism, are not Deity and Satan the only beings in the Universe who will eternally refuse to forgive the sinner? And yet Deity and Satan are in no sense injured by the transgressions of man! All who have been injured, are not only willing to forgive the offending party, but do actually extend forgiveness to the transgressor; while forgiveness is eternally refused by those alone who have been in no wise injured by the sinner! A. C. T.

CHARACTER OF RELIGIOUS PERIODICALS.

"One is surprised in looking over the mass of religious papers in this country, to find how small a proportion of the matter they furnish is *practical*, devout reading."

We copy the foregoing from the Sunday School Journal of the 19th ult. It is not singular to us that our Limitarian friends indulge feelings of surprize at the character of the great "mass of religious papers" whenever they sit down and coolly reflect upon their contents. We are rather surprized that this sad deficiency has not been sooner perceived. We have long been aware of it, and have more than once called attention to it.

We say again, take the great "mass of religious papers," (and this of course comprises Limitarian journals, for they will acknowledge none other *religious*) and truly how little "*practical* matter" they contain? We have one now before us. The burthen of its columns are *Missions, Missionaries, Protracted Meetings, Revivals*, &c. The first article is a Review—Memoir of a Missionary. Then follows in order, *the glory of the age*, or *spirit of missions—sinners excuses for not becoming christians—cause for the alarming* SUSPENSION OF DIVINE INFLUENCES *within our borders—dealing of God with a particular Congregational society—ancient revivals*. This comprises one page, which is a very fair sample of the contents of the remainder of the paper, under the heads *Missionary Record, Revival Record*, &c. Some of the benefits of revivals may be learned by consulting an extract of a letter from H. Spencer, to the editors of the Magazine and Advocate, inserted in another part of our paper. While the "mass of religious papers" continue to be prostituted to the unholy purposes of sustaining and encouraging such practices as are there detailed, or measures that naturally lead to them, well may we mourn over the desolations of Zion. It many times appears astonishing to us that our limitarian friends cannot perceive the end of these things. If they wish to drive christianity from the abodes of men, let them continue to preach and write as they have done for a few years, and if their success is proportioned at all to their zeal, they will be left to the miserable reflection of witnessing a wide spread scene of skepticism through our country, as a natural result of their labors.

Ask the person disposed to doubt the christian religion, for his reasons, and he will at once point to these very consequences, and desire to know whether they are the work of so pure and spotless a being as the Christian's God is claimed to be—he will point you to the works of nature and ask you to reconcile the palpable inconsistencies between the two—and who can accomplish this Herculean task? What is the consequence. These early teachings are so fastened in the mind, that they cling to them with a death-like grasp—even at the expense of the sacred scriptures themselves. The prominent feature of limitarianism (endless misery,) in connexion with these extravagancies is closely associated in their mind with every thing like christianity, and they therefore pronounce the whole a *cheat*, and thus, like some bewildered mariner, are cast adrift upon the broad sea of doubt and uncertainty. We entreat Limitarians to think of these things. Though the suggestions may come from one, whom, in the plenitude of their charity, they will denounce as an *infidel*, yet they may sooner or later be found to approximate too near the Truth. P.

Original.

On reading tract No. 206 published by the "American Tract Society," I found the following, which, with much more to the same purport, naturally led my mind into a train of reflection.

"Do you know of none within the sphere of your practicable exertions, who hold erroneous sentiments in relation to the fundamental doctrines and duties of the gospel? Do you not love their souls, and are you not grieved that they should entertain false notions of religion? Do you not see injurious effects upon their practice, resulting from their erroneous principles; and are you not apprehensive they may prove fatal to their hopes of happiness beyond the grave? Are you not at times disposed to warn them of their danger? But something restrains you from what you fear will prove an invidious office. You question the propriety of your interference with the faith of others, or doubt the success of your endeavors to change their opinions; and so you hesitate in doing what the secret intimations of conscience may, perhaps at this very moment, suggest to be your bounden duty. * * * * * * * Look around you, Christians, upon those who 'err from the truth:' who are in constant danger of eternal death, and whom you must meet by and by at the judgment-seat of Christ! They are your dearest relatives; your friends and neighbors, over whom you have much influence. * * * Are they not of more value than a thousand worlds? And must they not be miserable, without hope, and forever, unless by some means they are brought to the knowledge of the truth? And are they not now in the broad road to destruction, passing within your reach? And do you love them? Why, then, Oh why are you not more anxious for them? Why do you seem willing that they should go down to death, without a tear of pity, or an effort to save them? Why is not your arm extended to pluck them as 'brands from the burning?' Why does not your zeal glow; your affections rise; your tongues speak; your time, and talents, and influence, become a willing sacrifice to save their souls from death?"

The writer of the above, and the party to which he belongs, regard Universalism as a fatal error, and its believers as in the road to eternal ruin. And yet what a backwardness they have hitherto shown to rescue these supposed errorists from their situation. This doctrine, whether true or false, is rapidly spreading in our country, and unless soon suppressed will at no distant period take the lead of all others.

In perusing the tract from which the above is an extract, a plan suggested itself to my mind, which I will submit to the consideration of our limitarian brethren. It may not be improper, however, first to state that the Universalists in the United States publish about twenty periodicals, devoted to the dissemination of their religious sentiments. And that the columns of these papers are generally, if not without exception, open to all denominations of Christians for free discussion. They likewise own a large number of churches which are generally open to preachers of other sects.

Untiring zeal for a few years past has been manifested by the various parties of religionists in establishing societies to promulgate what is deemed light and truth. Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Foreign and Domestic Missionary Societies, and Sunday School Societies, etc. etc. —have been organized. But there is one society yet lacking that has some claim on their attention. I hardly know what name to give it,

I will for the present call it—a society to convert Universalists to the belief of the doctrine of endless misery.

Partialism may justly boast of a large number of learned and talented advocates, who suppose that all the light and truth of the gospel are in their possession, and that reason and scripture are on their side. If all this be true, and the Universalists are open to conviction, (and I think they are) would it not be a philanthropic act on the part of our limitarian brethren, to add one society more to their long catalogue, and appoint committees in various parts of our country to spend their time and talents in laboring in the spirit of love and chrity with Universalists, that they may be convinced of their mistake, and thus a check be put to the progress of their doctrine.

I am aware that attempts have been made to suppress the spread of Universalism, but as yet they have generally proved unsuccessful. Very little can be accomplished in declaiming against this sentiment in Partialist churches where the hearers are generally already built up in the joyful faith of hell torments; or by writing against it through limitarian papers which are read almost wholly by those whose hopes are established in the doctrine of endless misery.

Then let a society be immediately organized and committees* appointed consisting of one, two, or three talented and prudent disputants to each Universalist paper. And if they have reason truth and scripture on their side, if Universalism be a delusion, and if souls are "of more value than a thousand worlds," O, what incalculable good may be done! It is surprising that Partialists have not long ago adopted this plan. They cannot desire a better opportunity of bringing their arguments to bear upon the minds of the Universalist community, than the priviledge of writing through their papers. I would likewise recommend that a committee of candid and learned clergymen be appointed to visit Universalist churches, and in a charitable spirit communicate the "reason of the hope that is in them." For if we are in an error, it is high time that we knew it; and the sooner our doctrine is suppressed the better. Will the editors of limitarian papers lay the above suggestion before their readers? S. J. H.

*Should a society as above suggested be organized, I should hardly think it advisable to put Dr. Brownlee on either of the committees as he has shown of late a great aversion to Universalist papers and churches.

Original.

A REFLECTION.

One grand excellency Universalism has—it manifests a God who it is safe and right to imitate; but it is highly improper for any one, more especially a parent, to attempt to imitate a God who punishes without intending to do the punished any good. The benevolent religion of our divine Master, presents our heavenly Father in a most amiable light, as being impartially good and kind, divested of all cruelty, and permits us to approach him with confidence and affection in acts of worship. He possesses in the highest perfection every adorable attribute, and every principle that is calculated to command our highest veneration. Of this we are deeply sensible when we take into consideration his unerring *wisdom*, which devised the grand scheme of the whole creation; his perfect *goodness*, which actuated him at the first, and will finally be all in all; his almighty *power*, carrying into effect every design of his *wisdom*, intended wholly for good; his unfailing *mercy*, which rescues his fallen creatures from sin and misery; his immutable *truth*, which confers freedom and enjoyment upon its believer; his inflexible *justice*, which never degenerates into cruelty, but administers a due punishment for every sin, yet is guided by an eternal rule of right, and which in the glorious consummation will make all just and perfect; and also his unbounded LOVE flaming thro' the material Universe, shining most brilliantly in the gospel, and will ultimately fill all minds with unmingled joy, and immortal felicity.—"Glory to God in the highest." G. M. Jr.

Original.

Two ladies, one a Universalist and the other a Presbyterian, had a short controversy a few days since upon the doctrine of *endless misery*. The first contended that it *was not right*, because it was cruel and contrary to the nature of God, and contradicted his promises; but the second contended it *was right*, because God had a *perfect right* to do as he pleased with his own—he had threatened it, and his justice required it.—The first, in return, maintained that God had not threatened it, and that his justice did not require it. A few days after the Presbyterian lady called on her Universalist neighbor, and the following dialogue ensued—

Universalist. Have you heard about the man who took his little son, put his head in the fire, and singed all his hair off?

Presbyterian. [With much surprise] No! Who has done such a cruel act?

U. I don't know his name. But why do you call it *cruel?* His hair will grow out again: and beside, had he not a right to do as he pleased with his own child?

P. Why you *know* it was not right. He might have corrected him in some better way. What did he do it for?

U. Because he would not obey him. He was contrary and stubborn.

P. He is not fit to have a child! He's a cruel monster.

U. Why do you exclaim so against this man, who you say is cruel, and unfit to have a child; and yet say our heavenly Father will punish his children in hell fire to all eternity, for disobeying him, without intending to do them any good.

The Presbyterian lady was confounded, and sat wrapped in silent contemplation.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Z. S." has been sometime in the hands of the Senior Editor, and should have been acknowledged before. It shall receive attention as soon as circumstances will allow.

"*Aspasio,*" is received and shall appear with the desired reply in due time. At present the editor concerned is so much engaged as to forbid an immediate attention.

Erratum.—The letter whose receipt was last week acknowledged from N. S. *Madison*, N. Y. was from N. S. Medina, N. Y.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach in Williamsburg Friday evening July 5th.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach at the Callowhill-st Church, Philadelphia, on the 1st, 2d and 3d Sundays in July.

Br. Andrews (of Philad.) will preach at Danbury, Con. on the 1st Sunday in July; at Bethel on the Monday evening following; at Newtown on Tuesday afternoon or evening (the 9th); at Bethlehem on Wednesday evening, (the 10th) at Litchfield, South Farms, Thursday evening, 11th); at Wolcottville, Friday evening, (the 12th); at Winsted on the 2d Sunday of July, and at Collinsville on Monday evening the 15th.

PROSPECTUS

For the 3d vol. of the Messenger, to be published simultaneously at New-York and Philadelphia, under the title of

NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN MESSENGER AND PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSALIST.

The proposed change in the manner of publication of the Messenger, induces us thus early to present proposals for the *Third* Volume. No essential change will be made in the course of the paper, unless it may be to avail ourselves of every possible opportunity of increasing the talent and interest in its columns. It will, therefore, in the language it has ever held forth to the world, continue to "plead the cause of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians—the UNIVERSALISTS;" endeavor to inspire confidence among its friends, and to induce as far as possible the thoughtless and unconcerned, and even opposers, to come forward into the field of examination and "reason together" on the great and glorious doctrines of a *world's reconciliation to God.*

CONDITIONS.

The "*N. Y. Christian Messenger and Philadelphia Universalist,*" will be published simultaneously in New-York and Philadelphia, every Saturday morning, on a royal sheet, quarto form, and close print, at $2 per annum, *in advance,* or $2 50 if not paid within the first six months. The first No. will appear on the first Saturday in Nov. next.

Subscribers in New-York and Philadelphia will be promptly served by Carriers, and all possible care will be observed in the Mailing department, that subscribers may regularly receive their papers.

The publishing office in New-York is at No's. 2 and 3 Marble Building, Chatham Square, and in Philadelphia, for the present, at No. 132 Chesnut-street adjoining the United States Bank.

P. PRICE,
Publisher and Proprietor.
New York, June 1833.

Original.

WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF W. W.C.

I stood by his bed, whilst the angel of death
Hovered over his brow, and demanded his breath:
The colors of youth from his visage had fled,
Which, seemingly, longed for the shades of the dead.
No more did his cheeks like the fresh roses, bloom,
Which hung in suspense o'er the vaults of the tomb:
No more did his eyes, as they once did, express
The thoughts of his heart, from its deepest recess.
Pale, pale grew his countenance, faltering his breath,
Which seemed to unite with the dirges of death.
The monarch of terrors in awful array,
Stood ready to snatch, (from existence,) his prey.
In silence the father wept over his son,
While tears of distress down his sad bosom run;
In anguish the mother exclaimed, but too late—
Oh save, gracious heaven! my son from his fate!
While sisters endeavored to hide their sad grief,
And relatives sought, but in vain, for relief.
They saw, yea, they felt, that their friend must depart,
Which thrilled, with despair, every pulse of the heart:
The lamp of existence grew dim in his breast,
His soul sinking, seemed, in the ocean of rest.
All, all was enrobed in the mantle of gloom,
A stillness pervaded, that haunts the cold tomb;
When, faintly, his voice seemed to rise with a breath
That broke, and aroused the deep silence of death.
"Cease, cease thy sad sorrowing, shed not a tear,
For now, even now, does my Savior appear!
Ambrosial fruition unfolds to my sight,
And fans up the flames of immortal delight!
I go, let me go to the bosom of joy,
Where sorrow and sighing shall never annoy:
Where glory and ecstacy beam on the soul
Whilst ages on ages forever shall roll!
FAREWELL! FAREWELL! 'I mount, I fly,' the heavens with anthems ring,
'Oh grave where is thy victory, Oh death where is thy sting.'"

E. D. K.

East-Bloomfield, June 1833.

THE VILLAGE GRAVE YARD.

There is a melancholy pleasure to be felt in visiting the grave yard, and lingering over the tomb where reposes in hallowed silence the mouldering clay once the habitation of an active spirit, loving, hoping, fearing, actuated by the same passions as the beings who move on over the place formerly occupied by the departed. The soul possessed of any sensibility cannot but pause to reflect, and that solemnly, on the vanity of human pursuits, and to sigh at the recollection, "Man's life is but a vapor; it continueth a little while, then vanisheth away, and is no more seen forever." Hard indeed must be the heart of him who can move gaily on casting but a cold glance on the grave where sparkling, buoyant, ambitious youth is entombed, or where lies on a damp, unseemly bed a delicate form now bereft of all the charms of beauty, of all the freshness and loveliness of youthful anticipations.

I like such thoughts. To me, there are few things which afford such mood for serious meditations as a visit to the place consecrated to the memory of the dead, and whenever in traveling the country I chance to perceive the white marble contrasting with the dark foliage around it, I feel drawn to the spot that I may read the epitaphs of the dead, and partake in some degree the solemnity which such places inspire. I look upon each stone as a monitor pointing out to me the vanity of life, as a book of by-gone days in which I may trace thoughts and feelings and affections that have long since passed away. Sometimes the words of the scripture imparting a ray of timid hope, sometimes broadly descriptive verse emblazoning in bold characters, a reputation for the dead, but a mean covering for an ill spent life. Here perhaps in conscious importance is exhibited a richly carved sepulchre, separated from the vulgar crowd around, that even Death may fail in levelling all distinction. But such precaution is useless. There is no hand to restore the wearing of time. Tall rank weeds grow from the sand about it, and the marble *will* decay. We turn with a secret satisfaction to the tomb which honest poverty exerts itself to raise as a feeble tribute to departed merit, a rudely lettered stone which tells simply that "one lies here cut off in the spring of life," or, "in the extremity of ripened years," a name, a date, and perhaps a line commemorative of homely virtues. In another spot we will discover a heap of sand without a blade of grass upon it, and but a stake driven in the ground to mark the place. Upon the breast of the unknown occupant of the grave rises a tall, withered, blasted weed. Who was it? It was a homeless, friendless stranger who laid him down in a land far from the place of his birth, unpitied, unlamented. Perhaps even now, a fond mother is longing to behold him, and counting over the weeks and years of his long absence, and yet he comes not! Nor ever will come to receive a parents last blessing.

I remember many years since residing for a short period in a secluded village in which the din and bustle of the jostling world seemed to have no place. Every thing about it was hushed in quiet—a quiet almost as holy as that which hung over the solitary grave yard that lay embosomed in waving trees at a little distance.—Thither I often wandered on the approach of evening sometimes for the sake of perusing alone a favorite author; at others, from the mere force of habit. But a short distance from the place there stood a neat little dwelling with its porch and front entirely covered with creeping vines, and a handsome garden well filled with flowers and fruit, cultivated by a man well stricken in years. I observed him after watering his garden flowers, open a small wicker gate that separated him from the grave yard, and bearing a small watering pail in his hand approached one corner where was a solitary grave.

He did not perceive me and from my situation I could observe all his movements. He set the pail upon the ground, and carefully propped up a rose that had been bent—he planted a few more which he held in his hand and watered them that they might flourish. He kneeled down upon the grave and unseen as he thought by any but Him to whom he addressed his prayer, he prayed silently. When he arose and returned toward his house tears were coursing down his furrowed cheek. Who would not have been affected? Upon inquiry, I learned that the grave was that of the old man's wife; that she had died several years before, but that no persuasion would induce the old man to leave the place they had occupied together, and every night he would go out and water the flowers on her resting place. Some said he was deprived of his reason, and so indeed he might be were he judged by those in whom fashionable selfishness would forbid the idea of such enduring affection.

I left the place shortly after and did not return untill a year had elapsed. Then I visited the grave yard again. The house was closed up and the garden overgrown with weeds; I went to the corner where was the solitary grave. It was no longer solitary. The old man reposed in quiet beside the one he had loved in life. The roses he had planted were withered, but a kind hand had covered the spot with long grass, and a single violet waved at the head of each grave.—*N. Y. Weekly Messenger.*

CONTEMPLATION.

I love contemplation. I love the fresh beauty of spring that is so wildly bursting around us. I could ask, is there a heart which does not beat with rapture, as the eye wanders along over the green and the red, the blue and the white, the lights and the shades that rest on the broad bosom of Spring. The old hills, that have stood for ages, stand off like sentinels, with their summits bound in green—the forest stretches away at a distance, flinging its freshness to the far off skies, and a sweetness, which has escaped from the petals of the surrounding flowers, steals softly along amid the silence and shade of the valley. The blood of our very existence seems to bound with a more elastic motion, as we dwell upon such a scene—and our feelings are as bland and fleet as the wing of a swallow that dips along the streams. Rosseau said to his attendants, 'let me once more behold the sun set on the vine-clad hills of France,' and he was borne to his window, and his bosom beat as high at the grandeur of the scene as when in the full tide of health. Oh! what a soul for nature had he. If there is any season of the year calculated especially to rouse our sympathies it is Spring. We then think of those who sleep where there is no Spring. We think of that dark hall where flowers never bloom and the prattle of the joyful brook never breaks—where the chirrup of the bird, as he skims through the air, echoes not—the rustle of the tree breathes not—where neither freshness of the morning nor the dews of the midnight reach the dim and noiseless halls of death! It is a sad thought, when we behold all nature waking around us, that she holds those within her bosom which she cannot wake—and a sadder one still, that many a flower yet may bloom, many a dew-drop fall, many a bird rejoice above the monument of our sepulchre.

I love contemplation. I love Spring. And when I am called to lay me down among forgotten things, I would drop into nature's bosom when her glory was on her brow—I would close my eye amid the fragrance of the fields—I would breathe out my last breath to mingle with the sweets of the passing zephyr, and go down to the tomb with all the beautiful simplicity of nature around me.—*Rural Repository.*

UNIVERSALIST BOOKS.

The following Universalist Books are kept constantly for sale at the Messenger office, 2 and 3 Marble Buiding, Chatham-Square, New-York.

Chrsitian Messenger, Volume I. bound ,2 dolls.

Ancient History of Universalism, from the age of the apostles to the Reformation. Price $1,20.

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Just received at this office, a large supply of Convention Sermons, a neat 18 mo. volume, containing Sermons from Brs. S. Cobb, S. Streeter, M. Rayner, T. Jones, H. Ballou, and C. F. LeFevre, delivered before the General Convention of Universalists at Concord, N. H. in September last. For sale by the dozen or single. Price 25 cents, retail.

June 22.

213 Questions *without* Answers.

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